

THE CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A refrigerator compartment comprising substantially parallel side walls and a rear wall therebetween, a plurality of substantially vertically spaced shelf-supporting ledges along each of said side walls, said shelf-supporting ledges being disposed in substantially horizontally aligned pairs, at least one shelf defined by a piece of glass and front and rear border members each made of polymeric/copolymeric molded synthetic material, said glass piece having opposite side edges and opposite front and rear edges, said front and rear border members having a respective glass piece front edge-receiving channel and a glass piece rear edge-receiving channel, said channels open in opposing relationship to each other, said glass piece front and rear edges being secured in the respective glass piece front edge-receiving and rear edge-receiving channels, and at least a portion of each glass piece side edge disposed between said front and rear border members being substantially completely exposed whereby conductivity within the refrigerator compartment is enhanced.

2. The refrigerator compartment as defined in claim 1 including a space between each shelf-supporting ledge and an associated exposed glass piece side edge portion to effect air flow therebetween thus further enhancing conductivity within the refrigerator compartment

3. The refrigerator compartment as defined in claim 1 wherein opposite side portions of said front and rear border members are supported by said ledges.

4. The refrigerator compartment as defined in claim 1 wherein said rear border member is of a generally U-shaped configuration defined by a bight border portion and opposite leg border portions, said rear border channel is defined by a bight channel portion and leg channel portions of said respective bight border portion and said opposite leg border portions, and said glass piece rear edge and adjacent portions of said glass piece side edges are secured in the respective bight channel portion and the leg channel portions of said rear border channel.

5. The refrigerator compartment as defined in claim 1 wherein said front border member is of a generally U-shaped configuration defined by a bight border portion and opposite leg border portions, said front border channel is defined by a bight channel portion and leg channel portions of said respective bight border portion and said opposite leg border portions, and said glass piece front edge and adjacent portions of said glass piece side edges are secured in the respective bight channel portion of said front border channel and the leg channel portions.

6. The refrigerator compartment as defined in claim 1 wherein said front and rear members are injection molded upon and are thereby bondingly secured to said respective glass piece front and rear edge.

7. The refrigerator compartment as defined in claim 1 wherein said front and rear members are injection molded, and adhesive means for bondingly securing said front and rear members to said respective glass piece front and rear edges.

8. The refrigerator compartment as defined in claim 2 wherein opposite side portions of said front and rear border members are supported by said ledges.

9. The refrigerator compartment as defined in claim 2 wherein said rear border member is of a generally U-shaped configuration defined by a bight border portion and opposite leg border portions, said rear border channel is defined by a bight channel portion and leg channel portions of said respective bight border portion and said opposite leg border portions, and said glass piece rear edge and adjacent portions of said glass piece side edges are secured in the respective bight channel portion and the leg channel portions of said rear border channel.

10. The refrigerator compartment as defined in claim 2 wherein said front border member is of a generally U-shaped configuration defined by a bight border portion and opposite leg border portions, said front border channel is defined by a bight channel portion and leg channel portions of said respective bight border portion and said opposite leg border portions, and said glass piece front edge and adjacent portions of said glass piece side edges are secured in the respective bight channel portion of said front border channel and the leg channel portions.

11. The refrigerator compartment as defined in claim 2 wherein said front and rear members are injection molded upon and are thereby bondingly secured to said respective glass piece front and rear edge.

12. The refrigerator compartment as defined in claim 2 wherein said front and rear members are injection molded, and adhesive means for bondingly securing said front and rear members to said respective glass piece front and rear edges.

13. The refrigerator compartment as defined in claim 9 wherein said leg border portions are supported by said ledges.

14. The refrigerator compartment as defined in claim 10 wherein said leg border portions are supported by said ledges.

15. The refrigerator compartment as defined in claim 4 wherein said front border member is of a generally U-shaped configuration defined by a bight border portion and opposite leg border portions, said front border channel is defined by a bight channel portion and leg channel portions of said respective bight border portion and said opposite leg border portions, and said glass piece front edge and adjacent portions of said glass piece side edges are secured in the respective bight channel portion of said front border channel and the leg channel portions.

16. The refrigerator compartment as defined in claim 15 wherein said leg border portions are supported by said ledges.

17. A shelf particularly adapted for use in a refrigerator compartment comprising a piece of glass and front and rear border members each made of polymeric/copolymeric molded synthetic material, said glass piece having opposite side edges and opposite front and rear edges, said front and rear border members having a respective glass piece front edge-receiving channel and a glass piece rear edge-receiving channel, said channels open in opposing relationship to each other, said glass piece front and rear edges being secured in the respective glass piece front edge-receiving and rear edge-receiving channels, and at least a portion of each glass piece side edge disposed between said front and rear border members being substantially completely exposed whereby conductivity within the refrigerator compartment is enhanced.

18. The shelf as defined in claim 17 wherein said glass piece front and rear edges define with said side edges corner portions of said glass piece, and said corner portions are substantially encapsulated by said front and rear border members.

19. The shelf as defined in claim 17 wherein said glass piece front and rear edges define with said side edges corner portions of said glass piece, and said corner portions are at least partially encapsulated by said front and rear border members.

20. The shelf as defined in claim 17 wherein said glass piece front and rear edges define with said side edges corner portions of said glass piece, and said corner portions are totally exposed by said front and rear border members.

21. The shelf as defined in claim 17 wherein said glass piece front and rear edges define with said side edges corner portions of said glass piece, and said corner portions are totally exposed by said front and rear border members whereby said side edges are substantially totally exposed along the entire length thereof.

22. The shelf as defined in claim 17 wherein said rear border member is of a generally U-shaped configuration defined by a bight border portion and opposite leg border portions, said rear border channel is defined by a bight channel portion and leg channel portions of said respective bight border portion and said opposite leg border portions, and said glass piece rear edge and adjacent portions of said glass piece side edges are secured in the respective bight channel portion and the leg channel portions of said rear border channel.

23. The shelf as defined in claim 17 wherein said front border member is of a generally U-shaped configuration defined by a bight border portion and opposite leg border portions, said front border channel is defined by a bight channel portion and leg channel portions of said respective bight border portion and said opposite leg border portions, and said glass piece front edge and adjacent portions of said glass piece side edges are secured in the respective bight channel portion of said front border channel and the leg channel portions.

24. The shelf as defined in claim 22 wherein said glass piece front and rear edges define with said side edges corner portions of said glass piece, and said corner portions are substantially encapsulated by said rear border members.

25. The shelf as defined in claim 23 wherein said glass piece front and rear edges define with said side edges corner portions of said glass piece, and said corner portions are substantially encapsulated by said front border members.

26. The shelf as defined in claim 23 wherein said rear border member is of a generally U-shaped configuration defined by a bight border portion and opposite leg border portions, said rear border channel is defined by a bight channel portion and leg channel portions of said respective bight border portion and said opposite leg border portions, and said glass piece rear edge and adjacent portions of said glass piece side edges are secured in the respective bight channel portion and the leg channel portions of said rear border channel.

27. The shelf as defined in claim 26 wherein said U-shaped rear border member opens in a direction toward said U-shaped front border member, and said U-shaped front border member opens in a direction toward said U-shaped rear border member.

28. A shelf particularly adapted for use in a refrigerator compartment comprising a piece of glass and front and rear border members, said piece of glass having opposite side edges spaced a predetermined distance from each other and opposite front and rear edges, said front and rear border members being injected molded upon and thereby bonded to said respective glass piece front and rear edges, at least one of said front and rear border members being of a length shorter than said predetermined distance, and said at least one front and rear border member being substantially centered along a respective one of said glass piece front and rear edges whereby corners of said glass piece at opposite ends of said at least one front and rear border member are exposed.

29. The shelf as defined in claim 28 wherein another of said front and rear border members are of a length shorter than said predetermined distance, and said another front and rear border member is centered along another of said glass piece front and rear glass edges whereby corners of said glass piece at opposite ends of said another front and rear border member are exposed.

30. The shelf as defined in claim 28 wherein another of said front and rear border members are of a length shorter than said predetermined distance, said another front and rear border member is centered along another of said glass piece front and rear glass edges whereby corners of said glass piece at opposite ends of said another front and rear border member are exposed, and said glass piece side edges are substantially entirely exposed along the lengths thereof from corner to corner.

31. A shelf particularly adapted for use in a refrigerator compartment comprising a piece of glass and front and rear border members, said piece of glass having opposite side edges spaced a predetermined distance from each other and opposite front and rear edges, said front and rear border members being injected molded upon and thereby bonded to said respective glass piece front and rear edges, at least one of said front and rear border members being of a length longer than said predetermined distance, and said at least one border member being substantially centered along a respective one of said glass piece front and rear edges whereby corners of said glass piece at opposite ends of said at least one border member are unexposed.

32. The shelf as defined in claim 31 wherein another of said front and rear border members is of a length shorter than said predetermined distance, and said another member is centered along another of said glass piece front and rear glass edges whereby corners of said glass piece at opposite ends of said another border member are exposed.

33. The shelf as defined in claim 31 wherein another of said front and rear border members is of a length longer than said predetermined distance, and said another border member is centered along another of said glass piece front and rear glass edges whereby corners of said glass piece at opposite ends of said another border member are unexposed.

34. The shelf as defined in claim 31 wherein said at least one border member is defined by a bight border portion and opposite leg border portions collectively imparting a substantially U-shaped configuration to said at least one border member.

35. The shelf as defined in claim 32 wherein said at least one border member is defined by a bight border portion and opposite leg border portions collectively imparting a substantially U-shaped configuration to said at least one border member.

36. The shelf as defined in claim 34 wherein another of said front and rear border members is of a length longer than said predetermined distance, and said another border member is centered along another of said glass piece front and rear glass edges whereby corners of said glass piece at opposite ends of said another border member are unexposed.

37. A refrigerator compartment comprising substantially parallel side walls and a rear wall therebetween, a plurality of substantially vertically spaced shelf-supporting ledges along each of said side walls, said shelf-supporting ledges being disposed in substantially horizontally aligned pairs, at least one shelf defined by a piece of glass and a front border member made of polymeric/copolymeric molded synthetic material, said glass piece having opposite side edges and opposite front and rear edges, said front border member having a glass piece front edge-receiving channel, said channel opens in a direction toward said glass piece rear edge, said glass piece front edge being secured in the glass piece front edge-receiving channel, and at least a major portion of said glass piece side edges and rear edge members being substantially completely exposed whereby conductivity within the refrigerator compartment is enhanced.

38. The refrigerator compartment as defined in claim 37 including adhesive means for adhesively bonding said front border member to said glass piece front edge.

39. The refrigerator compartment as defined in claim 37 including adhesive means in said channel for adhesively bonding said front border member to said glass piece front edge.

40. The refrigerator compartment as defined in claim 37 wherein said front border member is in situ molded upon and bonded to said glass piece front edge.

41. The refrigerator compartment as defined in claim 37 wherein said front border member is in situ injection molded upon and bonded to said glass piece front edge.

42. The refrigerator compartment as defined in claim 37 wherein said front border member includes relatively short side edge portions each having a channel portion receiving a side edge portion of a respective side edge of said glass piece, and said front border member is of a substantially shallow U-shaped plan configuration.

43. The refrigerator compartment as defined in claim 38 wherein said front border member includes relatively short side edge portions each having a channel portion receiving a side edge portion of a respective side edge of said glass piece, and said front border member is of a substantially shallow U-shaped plan configuration.

44. The refrigerator compartment as defined in claim 39 wherein said front border member includes relatively short side edge portions each having a channel portion receiving a side edge portion of a respective side edge of said glass piece, and said front border member is of a substantially shallow U-shaped plan configuration.

45. The refrigerator compartment as defined in claim 40 wherein said front border member includes relatively short side edge portions each having a channel portion receiving a side edge portion of a respective side edge of said glass piece, and said front border member is of a substantially shallow U-shaped plan configuration.

46. The refrigerator compartment as defined in claim 41 wherein said front border member includes relatively short side edge portions each having a channel portion receiving a side edge portion of a respective side edge of said glass piece, and said front border member is of a substantially shallow U-shaped plan configuration.